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HEMI-SYNC AND THE SELF-REFLECTIVE LOVER

Apathetic, alienated high school students fail to learn and erupt into violence with shocking frequency. Peter Spiro traces the problem to a curriculum based on fear rather than love and has definite opinions on how the problem can best be addressed.

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HEMI-SYNC AND THE SELF-REFLECTIVE LOVER



by Peter Spiro

Peter Spiro is a playwright, a poet, and a former New York City school-teacher. His plays have been produced in New York City and Los Angeles; his poetry has been widely published in magazines and anthologies. Before leaving New York City for north-central Oregon, Pete taught in an alternative high school program for eleven years. Intense empathy for his students sent him on a search for ways to shift the odds in their favor. Here, he shares the philosophy behind his passionate commitment to true learning and the details of two Hemi-Sync interventions that made a difference. Pete became a member of The Monroe Institute's Professional Division in 2000. You may correspond with him at PSpiroNY1@aol.com

An Overview: Three Philosophies, Two Questions, One Curriculum

What we know is what we know; it means little, if it means anything at all. But to wonder, and to hold on to wonder about what we cannot know, there's Man dressed as though He were an angel. Not the most cunning among creatures, nor the most adaptable. But one sterling creature, uncertain as He may be, who can wonder that the very world He lives in exists. Wonder at existence itself. Wonder why there is something rather than nothing. The holiness of the internal experience isn't accessible to the standards of measurement and achievement to which we hold dearly in school. Having assimilated a mind-centered political/economic philosophy based on fear—fear of the unknown, fear of life, fear of death—we pass on this worldview to children through compulsory schooling and the curriculum of fear, the roots of which can be traced to the philosophies of René Descartes, Thomas Malthus, and Charles Darwin. And by using Hemi-Sync, among other tools, I've witnessed a few very troubled youngsters awaken to their own curriculum, which is self-identification and love.

Three Philosophies

René Descartes:

Descartes decided he could not trust his senses to give him reliable information about the world. How could he, he

wanted to know, have certainty about anything? He decided he could not. From this point of uncertainty, he realized, there must at least be the uncertain thinker. "If I can think this," thought Descartes, "I must certainly exist." *Cogito ergo sum*. He had found his certainty and his security. He conceived the world as a machine and himself as having little connection to it.

Thomas Malthus:

In 1800, Thomas Malthus, professor of political economics at the British East India Company College, found that humanity was increasing by a geometric rate while life-support resources were only increasing at an arithmetic rate. Ergo, he concluded that there are only enough resources for some of us to survive.

Charles Darwin:

A half-century later, Darwin expounded his theory of evolution, and as a consequence believed only the fittest species, and the fittest of each species, would survive. "It has to be either you or me. There is not enough for both."

Two Questions

The mind asks, "how, what, when, and why"; the heart only asks, "who."

The mind seeks to understand; the heart desires experience. The mind would like to transcend; the heart wants to embrace. The mind fears for our safety and searches for ways to remain safe; the heart's promise to us all is freedom.

Does thinking precede existence, or does existence produce thought? What Descartes, in his mystification, missed was mystery itself—the presence of wonder. What Descartes might have experienced had he gently persuaded his mind to relax was the opposite of what he had discovered: that is, "I am, therefore I think." The wonder of *who* he was preceded his thinking *that* he was. Beyond his desire for certainty, there was René's thumping heart: uncertain, unsure, and unafraid. Beyond thinking and perceiving, there is the eternal self-reflective lover, embracing what can never be understood.

While working for the British East India Company, Thomas Malthus helped propagate a philosophy of lack. It's an economic agenda to encourage competition. If we compete with each other for scarce resources, what we lose is the wealth of our connections to each other. Instead of

seeking the kingdom of heaven within, we search outward and measure wealth—not by who we are, but by what we have.

The physical form may indeed evolve, but since we are all much, much more than our physical bodies, Darwin's theories can become antagonistic to our prime evolutionary concern,

which is the expansion of spirit along the ever-widening spiral of life. Is life on Earth just a quest to survive? Or is it more like a laboratory in which we transform from opaque to transparent to the light of God? Darwin equates physical survival with success and physical death with failure. So much for our guaranteed return tickets Home, and the promise of the absolute perfection of eternal Love.

One Curriculum

Compulsory schooling embraces, celebrates, and helps propagate Descartes's notion that we are our minds. Only by cultivating a potent mind, children are taught, can they go out and get all those scarce resources Malthus warned us about. If they don't get those scarce resources, as Darwin suggested, they will cease to exist, thus failing in their life's purpose, which is physical survival. This curriculum supplants the inclusive curriculum of self-identification and love with what it calls "critical thinking skills." It convinces children to reject the overflowing impulses of their hearts, to compete, to envy those who have more and to have contempt for those who have less; it encourages fear through a comprehensive curriculum of continual observation, fragmentation, disorientation, punishment, reward, grades, and provisional self-esteem. They are drilled with the destructive notion they must "become somebody," rather than being reminded of the true worth of who they already are. They are taught to "achieve" an abstract goal of unattainable "success," which propels them forward into a life of chronic dissatisfaction and constant longing.

As a teacher, I tried to help students awaken, to remember who they really were. Within the chaos, mind-numbing boredom, ever-present fear, and potentially violent environment of compulsory schooling, I have witnessed "near miracles" when I've offered tools like Hemi-Sync to youngsters stressed by living and surviving day-to-day in extremely harsh and challenging circumstances. Within what may seem like absolute madness, one act of love can seem miraculous.

**The mind seeks to understand;
the heart desires experience.**

**The mind would like
to transcend; the heart
wants to embrace.**

With the faith of a mustard seed, indeed, we can perform miracles.

Step One: Focused Attention

I taught students who, for one reason or another, had not succeeded in either mainstream schools or other alternative settings. My class was the end of the road in a part of town where only outlaws and fools travel by foot. Year by year, I saw the students get harder, meaner, and more lost. Every one of them had either voluntarily dropped out or been thrown out of a previous school. Their ages ranged from sixteen to twenty-five. Most of the females had at least one child; most of the males had either been incarcerated or were on probation. If they didn't make it with me, they hit the streets and took their chances. It didn't take me long to realize that my education courses weren't doing me, or the students, much good. I needed something real, something that could change outlooks and modify self-destructive behavior patterns.

The year had started like any other year. My classroom was a basement room in a building in a housing project. The windows were ground-level, permitting very little light or air to enter. In the middle of the room was a large steel plate covering a sewage drain, and down the hall was the trash compactor. The room was infested with flies. Mice would scurry along the overhead pipes or inadvertently step onto glue traps where they'd wrestle mightily to free themselves, squealing until a maintenance worker removed them. And there were the students: hot, restless, disturbed, fatigued, undernourished, fearful, and on edge.

I had already run across the books of Robert Monroe and was listening to Hemi-Sync tapes because they made me feel better. So one day I took a boom box into my classroom and attached fifteen-foot wires to the speakers so they could be separated for stereo. I plunked in the *Remembrance* tape and synchronized the room. Then I nearly keeled over from what I saw. One particular kid, who normally survived each day by acting like a monkey on a pogo stick, suddenly took a seat up front and quietly completed each assignment. Most of the class thought he was absent! Still, I doubted whether the tape alone had helped him achieve this state of contentment.

But the same thing happened the next day, and every day

thereafter as long as *Remembrance* was playing. I finally had to accept that the tape was actually performing as advertised. "You're trying to calm me down with that brain music, eh?" the kid would quip with a wink as he passed me. He knew. So I ordered a variety of *METAMUSIC* tapes and played them all day long. And if I forgot to play a tape I'd always get a request, "Hey, play a brain tape." Soon I started handing out tapes for kids to play in their portable tape players. A kid would come up to me and ask for a "brain tape," then return to his seat and do the assignment.

The first time I played *Concentration* for the group, I'd given them a test to take because this was, after all, school. And in school people take tests. I surmised that they obligingly took the test because they liked me. But damn if they didn't seem totally committed and focused. It was only after the tape ended that the focus and the commitment faded, and everyone began to get restless and drop pencils.

I have looked out in the room as a *METAMUSIC* tape played and seen a kid's face so open, so pure and innocent, so peaceful, he looked like a cherub. I like to think the "brain tapes" helped get him there, if only for a short time. How much did a daily hour or two of *METAMUSIC* alleviate the stress and anxiety these kids lived with all the time? It worked well enough for a few to leave some of that stress and anxiety outside the door when they came to class. What the kids could have used was something intensive, away from the city—like a trip to the Institute for a *GATEWAY VOY-*

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AGE. They needed a solid introduction to their higher selves, like the one I got during my own *VOYAGE* where the mystery of who I am got a whole lot more mysterious.

A supervisor of mine was curious. So I gave her *Remembrance* to listen to in a portable tape player. She thought it nice, and left. But she returned the following morning to ask me where she could get that tape. It seemed her depression had mysteriously lifted after listening to *Remembrance* that afternoon. I gave her a catalog. At the end of the school year, she greeted me with a big hug. She was thoroughly pleased, grateful to have gotten off the Prozac® she'd been taking. Some teachers expressed interest in the "brain tapes," but the administrators seemed disinterested in spending budget money for them. The prevalent view was that Hemi-Sync was somehow abnormal.

I tried to get the kids in my classes out of the school system the quickest way possible. The system didn't nurture anybody. We needed a new paradigm. And I thought Hemi-Sync should be part of that new paradigm in the future and should be immediately incorporated into the existing curriculum everywhere. Instead of marching kids up to a stage to listen to someone sing "I can fly," they needed to take their own trips into the ether. *METAMUSIC* worked!

The Second Step: Expanded Awareness

During the 1997/98 school year, while teaching in a literacy program at the Harlem YWCA, I tried to re-create the total TMI experience for the students with my feeble technology. "If I can't get the students to the Institute," was my logic, "I'll bring the Institute to the students." Like always, it was an ugly room with little light or air. A flimsy felt divider separated the room into two classes. On one side were students who had scored less than a third-grade reading level. On my side were the students who had scored between third and sixth grade. Outside, poverty and violence were omnipresent. As we all left for a class trip one day, we were almost trapped in a cross fire between cops and two fleeing men and had to quickly duck back into the Y!

As my students arrived each day, they were greeted by Robert Monroe's voice on the *Morning Exercise* tape. "Good morning," it begins, "and it is a good morning." As the *Morning Exercise* played, I handed out paper and asked students to write whatever was on their minds. I showed them a large bucket labeled "Energy Conversion Box," and asked them to drop the papers inside when they were done. After they had converted their energy, I asked them to copy an affirmation I had written on the board. "I am more than my physical body" was the inherent message in quotes from various sources like *Seth Speaks*, *Conversations with God*, and others. The affirmations often sparked lengthy discussions about their meaning and application to daily living. The reading list was supplemented with metaphysical books such as Betty Eadie's *Embraced by the Light* and other accounts of near-death experiences, out-of-body travels, and remote viewing. Hemi-Sync played nearly nonstop throughout the day. I'd mix up *Concentration*, *Remembrance*, various *METAMUSIC* selections

and, on occasion, some Mozart and Gregorian chants. Sometimes I'd light a stick of incense, burn a candle, or charm the students by tracing their energy fields with divining rods.

It was a momentous school year in many ways. On the other side of the flimsy felt divider the usual madness transpired: chaos, anger, frustration, and a teacher so overwhelmed and fatigued she had to take a medical leave of absence after a few months. On my side of the divider I witnessed the miraculous: the tenderness of the human heart yearning to be exposed, shared, witnessed. At times the dichotomy became a distraction. Students from the other class flung paper and insults over the felt divider. Yet the students in my class were amazingly restrained. In fact, a common rejoinder to an insult would be: "We're more spiritual than you." Not that I equate ego-thumping with spiritual awareness, mind you, but the usual response would have been quick retaliation—with a fist, a box-cutter, or a bullet. Those kids were hungry for spirit. Their hearts were soaring!

Not everybody in the class transformed, but most did to some degree. And those youngsters who couldn't buy into the program quickly departed. The bond of love that had developed was that strong. By the end of the year, most students were reading and enjoying it. Some of the kids even took extra books home. They read them, returned them, and asked for more. I had to make a supply run to Barnes and Noble because they went through books much faster than I had anticipated. It took a lot of courage to tote a book home for some of them, when just carrying a book could be construed as a symbol of weakness.

Through dialogue and reading what was dropped into the "Energy Conversion Box" I discovered that most all of the

kids were experiencing the nonphysical world and were frightened by their experiences. For example, a student tells me that an Indian, whom no one else can see or hear, lives in her house and beats on a drum. Why is this happening? A deceased friend visits another in her room to pass along a message for her cousin. "Am I crazy?" A student writes that she can see the future and wonders if this ability is good or bad. A student describes weird dreams

in which he's walking around the house while his body is still asleep in bed. What does it all mean?

Most teachers would probably have referred them to the

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school psychologist. If they could not accept the unreality of their experiences, they'd be shipped off somewhere and given strong medication. Their track records of violent and maladaptive behavior could justify all sorts of severe therapeutic approaches. Physical reality is harsh; nonphysical reality is confusing and frightening. How do they cope? Sadly, they kill each other. And sadly, the killing is spreading to places like Springfield, Oregon, and Fayetteville, Tennessee. Why do children kill each other? What are they trying to say? Do they have a message for us? Perhaps we're being asked to rediscover basic truths, to reconnect with the intelligence of the Divine Plan unfolding in and around us.

**"If I can't get the
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was my logic,
"I'll bring the
Institute to the students."**

I've been lucky enough to sit up front and watch as bin-aural beats, masked by sounds of surf and music, relaxed kids' minds and unlocked their hearts. They became calm and composed, full of their own inherent sweetness, dignity, and charm. Few things change overnight. I can tell you that by the end of the year reading scores had improved. More importantly, however, a sense of connection to each other and a sense of connection to something even larger than that had developed. Young ones are demanding this connection with a most impassioned appeal. What shall our offering be?

The Third Step: Diving In and Stepping Out

During my final two years of teaching I worked in agencies where I was not allowed to use Hemi-Sync in the classroom. With the training wheels removed, I discovered how far I'd come and how much I'd learned. I taught the curriculum less and less until finally I could not, with good conscience, accept a paycheck any longer from an institution that was pressing me to demolish the unique beauty, courage, resourcefulness, and intelligence of these young ones. The gates on my

heart had broken completely open, and I could do little more than bear witness to the miraculous unfolding of life before me. Without doubt, these kids were my guides, gently (sometimes not so gently) nudging me toward the realization of who I really was: the eternal self-reflective lover embracing what can never be understood.

Into the unknown I go.

WHEN CLASS GOES REALLY WELL

You can sometimes pass my class
and hear voices loud
as the rapid ringing of bells, see a flurry
of hands like horse tails
whipping the air.
I move through the room, blazed
with golden light, like a torch, probing,
answering questions
with questions,
shrilled on by the sound of my students'
skirl. This is fine. Some say
true learning.
But when class goes really well
you can barely hear breath flexing.
It's as if we had slipped inside a tube
of deep round silence.
And you feel as you did when you were a child,
alone, looking out into freshly fallen snow
in the sweet hush of morning
eager to make the first fresh print in the field
with your own foot.

[This paper was originally presented as "Hemi-Sync and the Poetry of Learning" at the Seventeenth Professional Seminar in March 2000. An audiotape of the talk, which includes Pete's dynamic readings of several original poems, may be purchased for \$10.00 plus shipping and handling by calling (434) 361-9132 or e-mailing dec1pd@aol.com]



TARG TO DELIVER KEYNOTE ADDRESS



Elisabeth Targ, MD, will be the keynote speaker for **Hemi-Sync: Focus on Healing**, The Monroe Institute's Eighteenth Professional Seminar, which will be held March 9-13, 2002. Dr. Targ is the director of the Complementary Medicine Research Institute at California Pacific Medical School, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco, and a Fellow of the Institute of Noetic Sciences. She holds an award from the National Institute of Healthcare Research for her curriculum for training psychiatry residents in the area of spirituality and psychiatry. She is the principal investigator of a large Department of Defense-funded project for the study of the role of spiritual exploration and life-style change for women with breast cancer. She recently received two three-year research grants from the National Institutes of Health to continue her clinical research in the medical application of prayer and distant healing. Her work has been featured in *Time* magazine and the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as on the *Jim Lehrer News Hour*, the *NBC Nightly News*, and ABC's *Good Morning America*.



To Our Professional Members

By introducing your students, clients, and patients to Hemi-Sync, you make a difference in their lives and provide a valuable resource for times of crisis.

Person-by-person, you are helping to shift human consciousness in a positive direction.

Thank you!

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